

REMARKS

Claims 1-19 remain pending in the application.

Indefiniteness of Claims 10-19

Claims 10-19 were rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite. Claims 10-19 have been carefully reviewed, and are amended appropriately herein to be more definite. It is submitted that claims 10-19 are in full conformance with 35 USC 112, and therefore respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 1-19 variously over Li in view of Sacca and Chamberlin

Claims 1, 2, 8, 9, 10 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being obvious over in view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,612,996 to Li ("Li") in view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,692,042 to Sacca ("Sacca") and further in view of U.S. Pat. No. 4,817,127 to Chamberlin et al. ("Chamberlin"). The Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

All claims 1-19 are amended herein to variously recite an important distinction between the present invention and that of the primary references Chamberlin and Sacca: That the present invention is a **FULL-DUPLEX** system allowing a far end party to a telephone call to both hear playback of a recorded message AND to **SPEAK through the loudspeaker of the SPEAKERPHONE AT THE SAME TIME.**

The Office Action correctly acknowledged that Li fails to "teach injecting a message playback signal into the speakerphone". (Office Action at 3) The Office Action relies on Sacca to allegedly make up for the deficiencies in Chamberlin to arrive at the claimed invention. The Applicants respectfully disagree.

Sacca discloses a combined source signal comprising one or more alternate signal sources, e.g., tape playback, tones, synthesized speech, etc. for transmission over the telephone line. Sacca clearly teaches a HALF-duplex speakerphone. For instance, the Abstract of Sacca clearly emphasizes that the speakerphone has TWO MODES, either a transmit mode or a receive mode.

(Sacca, Abstract). This is a HALF-duplex system, as are many conventional speakerphones.

The Examiner combines Li, Sacca and Chamberlin to arrive at a theoretical speakerphone that would allow playback of a recorded message AND allow a conversation to occur between two parties, both listening to the message. However, such a theoretical speakerphone, even if properly combined by the Examiner, would still nevertheless be a half-duplex device.

In fact, not only is Sacca a half-duplex telephone, Sacca teaches AWAY from implementation of a full-duplex telephone. In particular, Sacca teaches that because “the speakerphone operation is bi-stable (only two stable states are possible, TX or RX), the system is essentially simple and can easily be adjusted to achieve desirable performance. Moreover, if one party talks, even pausing between words or sentences, the speakerphone remains in the same state until the other party interrupts.”

Can it be imagined how completely frustrating such a theoretical device would be in a half-duplex speakerphone. For instance, though it might appear that both parties to a speakerphone conversation would be able to listen to a recorded message, as soon as the far end person speaks, coughs, or otherwise makes a noise, the speakerphone at the other end would immediately switch to a receive (RX) mode. This would CUT-OFF transmission of the recorded message from the speakerphone, and thus at that point the far end party would not be able to hear the recorded message being played at the speakerphone.

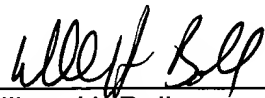
An advantage of being able to playback a voice message while speaking at a far end phone is, e.g., to allow a person listening to a voice message to comment on the voice message while a conversation is taking place. The cited prior art fails to disclose, teach or suggest such an advantage.

Accordingly, for at least all the above reasons, claims 1-19 are patentable over the prior art of record. It is therefore respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Conclusion

All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the subject application is in condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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